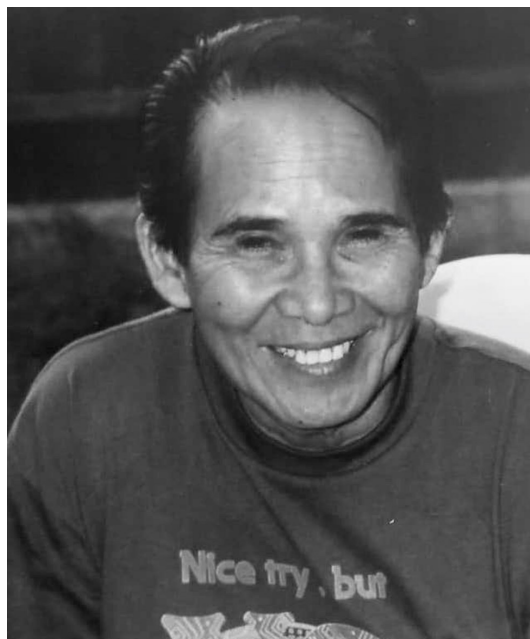


In Memoriam: Pedro C. Gonzales, 1932 - 2019

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Pedro C. Gonzales, 1932 - 2019

Pedro Cereno Gonzales, an acclaimed Filipino naturalist and conservationist, died 16 January 2019 in Zamboanga City, Philippines. He is survived by his wife, Carmen Santos (Manawag) Gonzales, and six children Aristotle, Bethzaida, Christopher, Diogenes, Ellenore and Ramon, and by 19 grandchildren.

Pete Gonzales was born in Vinzons, Camarines Norte, Luzon Island on 30 January, 1932. He graduated from the University of the East in 1957 and that year started working as a Scientific Aide in the Division of Zoology at the National Museum of the Philippines. Pete has trained in many institutions worldwide, as a scholar supported by UNESCO and the Colombo Plan among

others. He earned his Master of Science degree at the University of Queensland, Australia in 1965 and completed additional graduate courses at the University of Hawaii.

Through the course of his tenure at the National Museum of the Philippines he rose through the ranks to become the head of the Zoology Division, which prospered under his leadership, in collaboration with colleagues from the US National Museum (Smithsonian Institution – C. A. Ross, R. Crombie), Chicago Field Museum of Natural History (L. R. Heaney, S. M. Goodman) and Cincinnati Museum of Natural History (R. S. Kennedy, J. T. Ferner, H. C. Miranda, R. M. Brown). In the 90s, Pete served as Press Relations Officer (P.R.O.) of the Association of Systematic Biologists of the Philippines (ASBP). He retired in 1997 and spent the remainder of his years living with his family in Zamboanga.

He published numerous papers on the natural history of the Philippine fauna, many of which in collaboration with us. Like most early naturalists in the Philippines, Pete's work was broad, ranging from marine biology to ornithology and mammalogy. Besides birds and mammals, Pete had a special interest in

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marine biology and published papers describing new species of invertebrates, such as the varunid crab *Noarograpsus lobulatus* (Manuel, Gonzales & Basmayor, 1991). In recognition of his contributions to Philippine natural history, a new species of rodent from Luzon, *Chrotomys gonzalesi* (Figure 1) was named after him (Rickart & Heaney 1991). A selected list of his publications is below.



Figure 1. Isarog striped shrew-rat, *Chrotomys gonzalesi*, an endemic murid rodent from Mt. Isarog, Camarines Sur named after Pete Gonzales. (Illustration by Velizar Simeonovski, Mammals of Luzon Island: Biogeography and Natural History of a Philippine Fauna. 2016. John Hopkins University Press).

Pete was one of the pioneers of the conservation movement in the Philippines. In 1972, he was instrumental in the founding of The Haribon Society by Alicia Busser, which started as a bird watching group that fueled the fledgling conservation movement in the Philippines. The Philippine Eagle Conservation Program was the research arm of Haribon in the early 1980's. The Haribon Society evolved into The Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources and is one of the premier conservation organizations in the Philippines and Southeast Asia today. As the Philippine representative for UNESCO's Committee on Marine Sciences, he actively campaigned for marine biodiversity conservation in the country, and spearheaded the establishment of the first ever National Museum marine exhibit in Fort Pilar, Zamboanga City.

In 1989, Pete Gonzales and Bob Kennedy partnered to form the National Museum of the Philippines – Cincinnati Museum of Natural History (NMP/CMNH) Philippine Biodiversity Inventory with their sights set on Mt. Baloy on Panay that year. They were joined by Filipino colleagues J. Cabalquinto, E. Cañada, P. Comintan, M. Ebreo, R. Fernandez, J. Lasugas, M. Manuel (now Santos), E. Sagcal, V. Samarita and R. Sison, and by Cincinnati colleagues D. Burt, J. Ferner, L. Moores and J.

Ruthven. This landmark expedition led to more than a decade of cooperation between the two institutions and to major support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The NMP/CMNH surveys covered most of the major Philippines islands, from Batan Island in the northern Philippines, to Tawi-Tawi in the Sulu Archipelago in the southern Philippines. Many of these sites had never been fully explored before. Through the course of these projects, many new species were described including the Panay Clouddrunner *Crateromys heaneyi* (Gonzales & Kennedy 1996) the Panay Striped-Babbler *Stachyris latistriata* (Gonzales & Kennedy 1990), and Lina's Sunbird *Aethopyga linarabori* (Kennedy, Gonzales & Miranda 1997). These expeditions have significantly contributed to the body of knowledge of the Philippine fauna, culminating in the 2000 publication of the landmark book *A Guide to the Birds of the Philippines*, Oxford University Press, which he co-authored. Other fruits of that program included the modernization of the collections facility and the digitization of the National Museum Zoological Reference Collection information system.

Pete was a master field man; one of the best Filipino field naturalists ever. He led expeditions for long periods of time, and in some of the most remote areas in the Philippines. Many of these places were inhospitable and hostile. These expeditions sometimes had as many as 50 porters employed to provide support for Filipino and American scientists.

His humility as a person often overshadowed his skills in organizing and planning logistics for expeditions on a massive scale. Above all these, Pete was known for his kindness and generosity to his staff. He accommodated every student who looked up to him for guidance and served as a great mentor to many students who are now leaders in the Philippine conservation movement.

Truly, Pete's contribution has served as a major pillar of Philippine natural history and ornithology, and clearly was an important catalyst to the explosive growth of bird watching, and the strong conservation movement that we see in the Philippines today. We salute you Pete Gonzales and thank you for years of collaboration, collegiality, and friendship!



Figure 2. Pete Gonzales (right) with colleagues from the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History (CMNH) during the 1989 Panay Island Expedition. From left to right: DeVere Burt (then Director of CMNH), Bob Kennedy (then Deputy Director for Collections and Research at CMNH), and John Ruthven (Wildlife Artist and International Conservationist). Flag is from the Explorer's Club of New York brought along by Explorer's Club member John Ruthven. Similar flags were carried by Robert Peary on the first trip to the North Pole, by Charles Lindbergh when he made the first solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean, and by Neil Armstrong when he took the first step on the Moon!



Figure 3. Photo showing a large party in one of the expeditions led by Pete Gonzales and Bob Kennedy at Mt. Baloy, Panay Island in 1989.

List of publications by Pedro C. Gonzales and colleagues.

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